

## Message Text

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16

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S/S-O: JLHOGANSON

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT

UNCLAS STATE 248374 TOSEC 160013

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: TRAVELLING PRESS REPORTAGE, FRIDAY EVENING,

FOR FUNSETH FROM S/PRS

NO. 1

WIRES:

1. AP (FREED): "WASHINGTON -- SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER LEFT FOR PEKING TODAY TO ASSESS THE UNCERTAIN CHINESE LEADERSHIP SITUATION AND TO TEST THE WIND FOR PRESIDENT FORD'S JOURNEY TO ASIA. KISSINGER AND HIS WIFE BOARDED THEIR JET AT ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE AFTER SAYING GOODBYE TO CHINESE AND JAPANESE DIPLOMATS.

"NO SHARP ISSUES ARE ON THE AGENDA WHEN KISSINGER GETS TO PEKING SUNDAY, AND HE HAS SAID THERE WILL BE NO DRAMATIC MOVEMENT TOWARD ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ON THE OTHER HAND, KISSINGER SAYS HIS TRIP AND FORD'S POST-THANKS-GIVING DAY VISIT TO PEKING SHOW THAT THE PACE TOWARD NORMAL RELATIONS IS BEING MAINTAINED ON A STEADY AND REGULAR BASIS.

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"THE FACT THAT KISSINGER IS GOING TO CHINA ESSENTIALLY TO PREPARE FOR FORD'S SUBSEQUENT VISIT IS ABOUT THE ONLY PARALLEL TO HIS FIRST VISIT TO THE MAINLAND IN 1971. THEN, ACTING AS PRESIDENT NIXON'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, KISSINGER USED THE PRETENSE OF ILLNESS TO DROP OUT OF SIGHT AND FLY SECRETLY FROM PAKISTAN TO PEKING. THAT EXCEEDINGLY DRAMATIC MOVE BROKE THE MOLD OF COLD WAR ANTAGONISMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. KISSINGER ALSO FOUND THAT CHINESE LEADERS WANTED BETTER RELATIONS AND WERE EAGER FOR NIXON TO VISIT.

"THE CIRCUMSTANCES THIS TIME ARE DIFFERENT WITH THE FORD TRIP LARGELY SYMBOLIC OF THE IMPROVED RELATIONS. IN DETERMINING THE PROSPECTS OF LONG-TERM RELATIONS, KISSINGER AIMS DURING THIS TRIP TO ASSESS THE MAINLAND LEADERSHIP SITUATION.

"THE MEN WHO DECIDED TO WELCOME NIXON AND SHIFT THE OLD RELATIONSHIP ARE REPORTEDLY ALL BUT USELESS BECAUSE OF OLD AGE AND ILLNESS. MAO TSE-TUNG, THE LEGENDARY CHAIRMAN OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY, IS NEARLY 82 AND DESCRIBED BY U.S. EXPERTS AS SERIOUSLY REDUCED IN POWER, EITHER BY HIS OWN DESIGN OR SIMPLY BY THE NATURE OF AGED WEAKNESS. CHOU EN-LAI, THE 77-YEAR-OLD PREMIER, HAS BEEN IN A HOSPITAL FOR WEEKS AND HAS CANCELED APPOINTMENTS WITH FOREIGN VISITORS BECAUSE OF ILLNESS. SOME AMERICAN SOURCES ARE EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THAT CHOU WILL EVER LEAVE THE HOSPITAL AND ARE SKEPTICAL OVER KISSINGER'S CHANCES OF SEEING THE MAN WHO MOVED CHINA OUT OF GLOBAL ISOLATION FOUR YEARS AGO.

"KISSINGER WILL BE DEALING MOSTLY WITH DEPUTY PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING, A SHADY FIGURE LITTLE KNOWN OUTSIDE CHINA. THE TWO MEN HAVE MET THREE TIMES BEFORE WHILE ATTENDING UNITED NATIONS SESSIONS IN NEW YORK.

"AS ALWAYS, THE SECRETARY WILL BE DOING A BALANCING ACT BETWEEN PEKING AND MOSCOW. A KISSINGER TRIP TO PEKING INEVITABLY STIRS UNREST IN THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH FEARS AN AMERICAN-CHINESE ALLIANCE WOULD DOMINATE ASIA. PEKING IS SUSPICIOUS OVER THE DETENTE POLICY WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW  
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PROCLAIM IS ESSENTIAL TO PEACE."

2. UPI: "WASHINGTON -- SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER DEPARTED FOR CHINA TODAY TO SET THE STAGE FOR AN UPCOMING PEKING VISIT BY PRESIDENT FORD -- A VISIT WHICH COULD OPEN A NEW CHAPTER IN SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS . . .

"ADMINISTRATION SOURCES SAID KISSINGER, WHOSE SECRET MIS-

SION TO PEKING OPENED THE DOOR FOR FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON'S  
DRAMATIC 1971 FLIGHT TO CHINA, WILL LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR  
SINO-AMERICAN RELATIONS CONDUCTED NOT ONLY WITHOUT NIXON  
BUT MINUS CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY CHAIRMAN MAO TSE-TUNG,  
82, AND PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI, 77. . .

"NO SPECTACULAR ANNOUNCEMENTS OR DECISIONS ARE EXPECTED  
FROM THE SUNDAY-THROUGH-THURSDAY KISSINGER VISIT, WHICH  
WILL COME IN A STABLE ATMOSPHERE FOSTERED BY BETTER TRADE,  
CULTURAL AND OTHER TIES BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND  
CHINA."

TELEVISION:

NO TV OR NEWSPAPER COVERAGE BY TRAVELLING PRESS.

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